

2003 Annual Report of the Environmental Finance Center Network

Region 2 - Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

The Maxwell School at Syracuse University was established in 1993 as the Region 2 Environmental Finance Center. The EFC serves the States of New York and New Jersey as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Introduction

The EPA Region 2 Environmental Finance Center (EFC) at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs was established in 1993. During 2003, the Maxwell EFC continued to build a considerable record of accomplishment. The *Public Management and Finance Program* (PMFP), which is now considered the hallmark project of the EFC, continues to thrive along with requests for other EFC services. The PMFP has been very well-received by communities in New York because it enables communities to better understand the relationship environmental finance has with other areas of government business, particularly economic or community development. The alliances and collaboration among technical assistance providers has been very instrumental in removing the gaps in the delivery of technical assistance, although all partners of the PMFP are cognizant that the

cumulative of needs among communities exceed the resources available. Other services provided by the EFC during 2003 included assistance with rate setting, facilitation of processes relative to environmental improvement, and training events focused on environmental issues, and analyses of funding options.

The water and wastewater related activities of the PMFP have received additional support from the USDA over the past two years. The bulk of activities performed under the USDA grant involved specific municipal water or wastewater projects in which there was a need to facilitate the *processes* involved in the planning, financing, and implementation phases. In addition to the process facets of specific projects, the EFC targeted the smallest communities of New York State for training and capacity building initiatives. The EFC ended the year with the submission of a proposal to the USDA Technical Assistance and Training Program (TAT) to include five other EFCs (KY, ME, MD, NC and NM) in the PMFP water and wastewater activities. This is the third year that the proposal has been submitted for multiple EFCs. It is hoped that the USDA will see the value and have the means to support a project implemented by the Environmental Finance Center Network, although it is understood that funding for such programs has declined due to homeland security and other national budgetary priorities.

An important area of need emerged in 2003 specific to water and wastewater public education and outreach relative to the costs associated with water. Although the EFC has always included educational components in its work, it has never focused extensively on the creation of public education strategies beyond the provision of basic facts. In New York, and probably throughout the country, appropriate public education methodology is an absolute must if American culture is ever going to treat water as a resource with a cost. EFC clients consider public perceptions of water as significant obstacles to the development of much-needed water and wastewater projects. The lack of understanding about water issues is a harsh impediment to progress when local governments seek to build or improve water systems. Local governments typically do not have the capacity to provide water-related education to the range of individuals within the public. Public outreach is not included in training events as something as important as public finance, capital budgeting, and all other important topic areas.

Of equal importance during 2003 were activities associated with the Source Water Protection project, performed under the leadership of the New Mexico EFC. The source water activities have led to interest from a private foundation to support building upon the work accomplished through EPA support. The EFC also provided assistance to the Onondaga Lake Partnership, which consists of six government agencies (including EPA) and numerous nonprofit organizations. The assistance involved facilitating a particular decision-making process relative to carrying out the plans to clean up heavily polluted Onondaga Lake. The EFC expects 2004 to be a year in which past and present efforts will be built upon and continue to flourish.

On-Going Activities and Projects

- Attendance at professional association meetings and presentations about the EFC Network, and topic-specific issues including capital planning and financing, the concepts of water and wastewater rate setting, collaborative planning, capacity building, and sustainable community development.
- Participating in planning prospective projects with government, nonprofit, and private sector partners of the Public Management and Finance Program. This includes projects that can receive support from private foundations.
- Collaborating with other technical assistance organizations to provide assistance to rural communities seeking to address environmental infrastructure improvement projects
- Serving as a content provider to government and non-profit organizations that provide assistance and conduct workshops for municipal decision-makers.
- Continued emphasis on collaborating with other universities and non-profit organizations to develop proposals addressing environmental concerns, particularly those relating to water issues but also including brownfields redevelopment, lead contamination, and more.
- Responding to requests from communities for assistance ranging from how to finance major water system repairs and how to develop capital budgets for environmental improvements to conducting focus groups to elicit public input or assess public awareness and support of environmental projects.
- Continuation of tasks and activities relative to specific projects, such as the Source Water Project, rate analysis, and customized forms of assistance in cost recovery.

Accomplishments

Public Management and Finance Program (PMFP)

Since EFC 2 was established at the Maxwell School, it has become a resource for municipal professionals and other community representatives through a variety of presentations, workshops, and interactive forums. The *Public Management and Finance Program* (PMFP), officially launched in April 2001, has served as a means for municipal professionals and

leaders from EPA Region 2 communities to learn, explore, and discuss public finance and other issues relative to environmental improvements. The PMFP has become the hallmark project of EFC 2 and has received funding from the USDA's Rural Utility Services Technical Assistance and Training grant program to support some of its water and wastewater activities.

During 2003, the PMFP continued to respond to requests from local government leaders to integrate new activities into its core components. First, the PMFP responded to requests from local government officials to hold topic-specific forums on a quarterly basis for local officials for the purpose of learning pertinent environment-related information. The first forum was planned for February, 2004. The guest speaker was a representative of the New York State Office of the Comptroller, with inter-municipal agreements the topic. The importance of this is a direct result of abutting communities finding that if they plan water and wastewater projects cooperatively, the costs can be substantially less. Unfortunately, many local government leaders are unaware of the range of legal and procedural issues involved.

The February forum will focus on a brief presentation regarding successful and unsuccessful attempts to create inter-municipal agreements, followed by a facilitated discussion concerning the requirements and suggested actions otherwise. EFC 2 will be engaging private sector engineering and finance firms to contribute to the sponsorship of these forums. Aside from the monetary value of providing support to the forums, the private sector has significant expertise to offer and will be asked to supplement some of these sessions with presentations and discussions about their experiences as appropriate and fitting to selected topics.

There is little change from 2002 in the primary functions of the PMFP to facilitate partnerships among technical assistance community, provide public outreach and education relative to environmental improvements, and training to local government officials and technical assistance providers. These three functions, or components, of the PMFP can be critical links to the ability of a community to successfully develop a project. The sub-sections below identify those links. (Refer to the 2002 Annual report for additional information about the components.)

Technical Assistance Partnerships

The EFC sponsors quarterly Technical Assistance Partnership Forums for the purpose of promoting and sustaining collegial relationships among technical assistance providers (TAPs) who very often find themselves working in the same community. During 2003 the Forums were attended by an average of 35 TAPs representing an average of 22 nonprofit, government, private, and academic organizations that serve New York as well as other states. This activity facilitates the Critical link of communication TAPs share information about projects they are working on individually and collaboratively and have reported that the Forums are a conduit

for the communities they serve to access new or additional resources. Furthermore, there have been instances in which two or more TAPs were planning to be involved with a particular project and through the Forum learned of the roles other organizations were playing. This type of information can be vital to the planning process, especially when there is a range of expertise involved. The Forums promote camaraderie among TAPs and the communicative exchanges reduce the likelihood of duplicative efforts, thus maximizing resources available to other communities. Each Forum begins in the morning with each TAP briefly mentioning projects or issues s/he is working with, followed by a specific topic of discussion. Affordability, funding procedures, conflict management, and frequency of billing were among the topics at the 2003 Forums. During the lunch hour, the EFC invites a guest speaker who addresses another topic of interest and then engages TAPs in an interactive discussion. The afternoon hours are set aside for open discussions about a range of issues, concerns, or projects with ample opportunity for people to network and share information. Attendance has increased at each Forum and it is anticipated that the increased participation will continue throughout 2004.

Stakeholder Outreach and Education

In the Executive Summary, reference was made to the emergence of public outreach as a critical need in communities pursuing water and wastewater projects. In New York it is quite common for the EFC to receive calls from communities that have attempted several times in the past to develop a much-needed project only for the voters to reject it on the basis of cost. Although public outreach has long been a component of EFC activities, during 2003 the public outreach and education activities were recognized as an absolute link to the ability of a community to generate awareness among the public regarding the benefits (or needs) of the project. The EFC approaches each community as a distinct entity in which no one-size-fits-all model of outreach and education can be applied. EFC staff meet with community leaders to learn the historical elements of a prospective project as well as the current conditions prompting the planning for the project. Information concerning the extent to which groups have formed in favor or opposition to the project is obtained as well as all information concerning estimated costs.

In some communities the EFC will conduct a series of focus groups to elicit input from homogenous factions within the population and to get insight into any concerns that might exist, what information (accurate or inaccurate) people have received, and what the general perceptions are. This enables the EFC to create a sensible strategy for the public outreach and education process. Depending on the community, the EFC might create material for distribution in which information such as the cost of wells septic systems are effectively depicted using graphic and verbal methods. Other material might include information concerning the costs associated with getting water from source to tap. While there is a myriad of information available in which such facets of water are illustrated, it is usually very generic and communities can be unresponsive if it is not their community and therefore inaccurate. EFC

material is often created to be specific to the community and consequently enjoys an element of responsiveness from community members that generic material cannot provoke. For example, in one community the EFC distributed information about the average annual costs to receive water from a well in New York many were surprised to learn that they were opposing a water project that would actually cost less per year than the well they were using.

Another outreach tool is the Community Roundtable. The EFC uses public property or voter lists from the local government to randomly invite up to 50 people to attend. To date, all Roundtables attract more than the number of people who responded that they would attend. The EFC brings a light meal in the early evening and creates a panel of experts at the front of the room. The panels are typically comprised of at least one local government official, an engineer, and a representative from a government-sponsored funding agency. The meetings begin with all present introducing themselves and stating what motivated them to attend. The EFC Director provides a set of rules concerning the purpose of the meeting and giving assurance that all views are valid and worthy of discussion. She then leads the panel through a brief series of questions concerning the impetus for the project, the technical feasibility of the project, and the anticipated costs per household. The panel provides information on how financing takes place, the length of time it will take for the project to be built, and other issues the EFC believes appropriate. The audience is then engaged in a facilitated discussion in which they are provided the opportunity to express their concerns. The Roundtables have always resulted in positive and highly constructive discourse focused on the project. Public officials frequently glean insight they previously did not have and the public always gets information that is accurate and framed in terms they can understand.

During 2003 the EFC worked extensively with a total of 27 communities in this regard. The work was intensive and fruitful in that in all communities the public at the very least understood the reasoning behind the government's decision to consider or proceed with a particular project. In numerous instances, individuals who previously opposed a project began to support it. Of the 27, two of the projects are scheduled for financing in 2005. Fifteen belong in one county and are still in the early stages of determining the value of a municipal drinking water system. A group of seven communities is roughly one year away from being prepared enough to establish an inter-municipal agreement and apply for financing a regional system. One community is evenly divided between support and opposition to a municipal water system and aside from that, it is possible that the New York State Office of the Comptroller will not approve the project due to the debt involved. One community is under a consent order to build a new waste water treatment plant and while the public was not initially supportive, through the work of the EFC there appears to be an acceptance of the pending costs. Finally, one community is on the verge of applying for financing a wastewater system, particularly if it can become a beneficiary to a municipal water project underway in an abutting municipality. The EFC is committed to continuing its work in each of these communities. Additionally, there have been inquiry calls from approximately 30 other

communities for assistance this comprehensive in nature from officials considering water or wastewater projects to meet regulatory compliance or economic development needs.

Training

The role of the Syracuse EFC (EFC 2) in providing training is somewhat unique. As the PMFP was being developed, the EFC sought to ensure that its training provisions complemented the training provided by its partners. The 2002 Annual Report noted that in EPA Region 2 there is an abundance of valuable training programs available. The Association of Towns sponsors an annual training conference which includes a broad range of subject areas, and the Conference of Mayors offers an annual series of workshops dedicated to public works issues. Also, the Rural Water Association routinely offers training to water system operators. Those, and other organizations extend the opportunity to participate to virtually all elected and many appointed officials.

The sheer number of people invited force a format to be developed for groups of peers as opposed to individual learners. EFC 2 assessed the values imparted to local governments through those programs and determined that its strength in the training realm was its ability to provide customized training. In many respects, the EFC has greater flexibility and professional resources to create instructional formats for smaller groups and for individuals.

EFC 2 discontinued training events that were repetitive of what its partners provided and focused on providing training in a multitude of subject areas over a three to four day period. Additionally, EFC 2 developed customized training modules to meet the needs of a particular community and provided to small groups of individuals in need of training applicable to a specific community situation. This allowed for the EFC to fill the gaps that were believed to exist in the delivery of technical assistance and training among smaller communities. During 2003 EFC 2 referred individuals to appropriate organizations for general training opportunities and invited a total of 467 local government officials (elected and appointed) to its specialized training events. Furthermore, the EFC made itself available to provide content to the training held by its partner organizations as needed and appropriate.

The launching event for the PMFP took place in April 2001 at Syracuse University's Minnowbrook Conference Center, located in the Adirondacks. In 2002, there were two PMFP events held at Minnowbrook. During 2003 there were three separate training events. In 2004, four separate multiple-day training events are scheduled each year, as the services of EFC 2 become more familiar to communities, the number of training events scheduled increases.

The subjects addressed in the training include public finance, capital planning and budgeting, rate setting, asset management, environmental conflict management and resolution, project

financing procedures and regulations, and the introduction of new technologies. Each training event has short case studies and/or simulations integrated into the format to promote the ability of participants to gain a range of stakeholder perspectives on a range of issues. All training is highly interactive and allows ample time for participants to discuss issues of mutual concern, share experiences, and initiate inquiries to technical assistance providers. This type of training format enables peer-to-peer learning as participants get into groups to solve problems presented in the cases, their strengths in terms of skill sets come to the fore. Each group is comprised of an equal distribution of technical assistance providers and government officials, which supports the ability of individuals to explore all perspectives of a given situation.

All training events conclude with an evaluation of the PMFP concept in which participants are asked what they would benefit from in the future. There is always unanimous expression of gratitude for the opportunity to participate in a forum with such a variety of resources and all community representatives commend the EFC for the format. The training events have enticed community leaders to remain in contact with the EFC, many requesting specific assistance or seeking to be put in contact with technical assistance services. The EFC is very proud of the foundation it has established for the PMFP in terms of having a means for technical assistance providers and local governments to interact in a comprehensive manner, using a variety of methods to promote learning, networking, and the delivery of solid expertise relative to environmental improvements. The concept is a clear winner with respect to responding to community needs and providing assistance with flexibility suitable to a given situation. The PMFP will continue to use highly interactive and participatory methods of delivering all of its components.

Source Water Protection Project

Under the leadership of the University of New Mexico EFC and in cooperation with New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Health, and EPA Region 2, the Syracuse EFC is working with a cluster of communities with common concerns for potential drinking water contamination. To achieve an outcome that combines both process facilitation and direct technical expertise, the EFC continued enjoying a collaborative relationship with the Water Resources Institute to carry out the activities of the project. It is scheduled to be completed by June 2004. EFC staff members have identified a private foundation interested in the Source Water Protection project and anticipate preparing a proposal to continue building upon the work performed under the subcontract with the New Mexico EFC.

The following activities were completed on behalf of the Source Water Protection Project during 2003:

- Began developing plans to build upon the successes of the project by contacting private foundations for support. To date, the project has attracted a foundation that has business interests in the county. The EFC anticipates that approximately \$5,000 will be provided for the purpose of conducting focus groups and community meetings to promote source water protection practices among homeowners. This work will set the stage for later work to promote actual testing of source water.
- Facilitation of meetings held by the Chenango County Water Operator's Council, a group of public and private water system operators and representatives from the County Health and Planning Departments, Soil and Water Conservation District and the local Environmental Education Center.
- Sponsored training sessions for water system operators in Chenango County; topics included source water protection, emergency planning and system security, and proper sampling techniques. Over 40 operators from public and private water systems attended.
- Hosted a public meeting for all system operators and elected officials in the County with the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, a federal agency responsible for monitoring water use in the Susquehanna watershed. This was followed by a Council meeting with Commission representatives to follow up on specific concerns.
- Published the first *Council Update*, the Council's quarterly newsletter distributed to all system operators and elected officials in the County. The first issue contained notes on the public Commission meeting.
- Completed or planned source water assessments to supplement the NYS DOH assessments to identify potential sources of contamination to drinking water.
- Held regular monthly Council meetings.
- Distributed meeting notes and agendas to all water system operators and other interested parties in the County (there are 63 system operators and 37 elected officials—congressmen, mayors, supervisors, state senators and assembly representatives).

The Source Water Protection Project is based on the notion that communities working proactively to protect their health and resources will prevent contamination of their drinking water sources. A proactive approach can help a community avoid serious health risks associated with drinking water contamination. It can also be an economical approach preventing contamination can be much less expensive than cleaning a contaminated source. The brochure the EFC developed in 2002 for distribution to water systems, customers,

community groups anyone interested in protecting their drinking water, continues to enjoy broad distribution and effectively provides basic information about source water protection. The EFC believes that the anticipated private foundation funding will be a tremendous asset to the continuation of this project not to mention the momentum within the County.

Rate Setting Assistance

During 2003 the EFC continued to work with communities attempting to create equitable user rates as they pursued water and wastewater system improvements. During 2002, the EFC developed a more customized system of delivering training and assistance to communities because workshops and instruction at training events did not appear as valuable to the actual learning process for many practitioners. What the EFC learned through evaluations was that the training events often resulted in information overload and municipal representatives derived greater benefit from more one-on-one methods of instruction. The EFC always does evaluations immediately after a training event and additional evaluations after time has passed in order to ascertain the extent to which individuals are applying whatever material was imparted during the training event. Immediately following the formal training events, most participants believe they received the information but after time passes, many were not using the information because they did not sufficiently retain it.

Providing individual assistance requires more time on the part of EFC staff, however, it results in the delivery of more comprehensive information to communities and ensures their ability to develop a stronger internal capacity to work with rate structures. In turn, this assures that the government's investment in the EFC will have the longer term impact it seeks. Over the past decade, the EFC has recognized that rate setting training delivered in the classroom to groups of practitioners does not have the same long term value, particularly when consideration is given to changes in political administrations responsible for rate setting decisions. Human nature inhibits many individuals in a group setting from asking specific questions relative to their circumstances, or otherwise fails to recognize differences in learning styles. By working with communities on an individual basis, the EFC is not only facilitating capacity-building within a community, it is complementing the broader training provided by other technical assistance providers, such as the Rural Water Association, which continues to deliver training using classroom methods.

During 2003 the EFC provided either comprehensive rate analyses or customized training to the Village and Town of Dunkirk, Town of Brocton, Village of Bergen, Town of Sheridan, and Town of Springville. There were nine other communities that contacted the EFC expressly about assistance with rate structures. The EFC anticipates working with several of those communities but cannot do so until specific data is made available.

EFC Collaborative Activities Summary

EFC Network

- The Public Management and Finance Program mentioned previously in its own section was the most significant collaborative activity during 2003, as it was in 2001 and 2002. EFCs located in Kentucky, North Carolina, New Mexico, Maine and Maryland were included in a proposal submitted to the USDA in December, 2003 to fund the water and wastewater work of the PMFP. The USDA experienced a significant reduction in program funds and committed only to renewing the current funding for the Syracuse University EFC. However, there are plans to seek alternate funding sources to enable the PMFP to begin at least some pilot activity in New Mexico and Kentucky.
- Through the leadership of the New Mexico EFC and in collaboration with four other EFCs, the EFC will continue to collaborate on the Source Water Project mentioned previously. The project has been extended through June, 2004.
- The North Carolina EFC provided an opportunity for the Syracuse University EFC to participate in a project in the Appalachian region. The EFC submitted a proposal to the North Carolina EFC in October to prepare environmental finance case studies relative to the region. The project received funding and is scheduled to begin in spring 2004.

Other

- Continued developing concepts and proposals with the Water Resource Institute of Cornell University to work with communities seeking environmental improvements. WRI has technical strengths and the EFC has financial and process-oriented services that, when combined, make a complementary team. During 2003 WRI and EFC discussed numerous prospective opportunities to consider for the future.
- Community Specialists of the Rural Community Assistance Program and EFC staff collaborated on several occasions in 2003 to provide comprehensive assistance to communities in need of drinking water systems. RCAP provided assistance in developing the applications for grants and loans while the EFC focused on methods to generate community support.
- The EFC and the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation began collaborating to provide assistance to a community exploring the development of a new wastewater system. The EFC role will be dedicated to public education

concerning the costs of the system and issues surrounding the impetus for the government to plan it.

Initiatives for 2004

- Develop next stage to the Source Water Protection Project scheduled of which the EPA support will end in June. The EFC has established contact with a foundation and plans to prepare a proposal to support focus groups and community information meetings during the summer and fall of 2004. This work will pave the way for additional project activities and growth. Thus, the intent of the EPA to provide seed funds to enable a broader project will be achieved.
- Establish quarterly events for local government officials to learn new information. During 2003 local government officials approached the EFC about supporting and facilitating topic-dedicated meetings on a quarterly basis for them to keep abreast of issues primarily involving regulations and procedures related to infrastructure financing. Although the EFC was able to conduct one such meeting, current funding levels do not allow for these events to be prioritized. However, the EFC believes that it is important for it to respond to local government needs, particularly when leaders are motivated enough to approach others for assistance. To respond to the request, the EFC met with private sector firms and will be receiving funds to support the activity.
- Continue to develop the Public Management and Finance Program, particularly with respect to pilot testing the concept in at least two other states served by an EFC. To date, this will involve coalescing technical assistance providing organizations, identifying two communities, and sponsoring travel to New York for representatives of those communities to receive training at one of the EFC's three-day training events. This will, first, show the commitment to the collaborative element of the PMFP, and, second, it will enable the PMFP to elicit data on the needs of communities outside of New York and, thus, be able to develop proposals for funding accordingly.
- Support graduate student projects to research various environmental finance issues for communities and other nonprofit or government associations. In May 2004 a group of seven graduate students will undertake research to assess the extent to which inter-municipal agreements relative to waster and wastewater projects render the economic and social values purported to be true. Students will interview officials from municipalities involved in inter-municipal agreements to implement water projects, in addition to conducting an analysis of the quantitative data of project financing and services delivered.

Summary of Activities

January / March

- January 10 - presented information to representatives of the Villages of Dunkirk and Fredonia and the Towns of Sheridan, Dunkirk, Pomfret, and Brocton officials to discuss the prospective development of water authority, and the assistance available from the EFC and other nonprofit, government, and private organizations.
- January 24 - met with officials of the Town of Alexandria and the Village of Alexandria Bay to discuss future plans to hold a community meeting regarding the planning and development of a water and wastewater system.
- February 1 - presented information to corporations and community based organizations at Syracuse University's Annual Inside SU, designed to introduce prospective supporters to the accomplishments of programs housed at Syracuse University.
- February 6 - met with Professor Larry Schroeder and Ph.D. student Carla Priazza regarding the development of public finance-public participation curriculum for training local government officials.
- February 16-19 - presented information about the EFC Network at the New York State Association of Towns Annual Meeting in New York City.
- February 27 - facilitated the PMFP's Partnership Forum for technical assistance providers, the primary topic was affordability; 34 attended.
- February 27 - met with the Water Resource Institute about collaborative projects in the future, discussed current Source Water Project underway in Chenango County.
- March 4-5 - attended the Environmental Finance Advisory Board meeting in Washington DC, which preceded the EFC Directors meeting that took place on March 5-6.
- March 12 - met with representatives of the Town of Campbell to plan a Community Roundtable for the purpose of engaging the public in planning a municipal water system. The work was performed at the request of the Rural Community Assistance Program.

- March 14 - attended an announcement by Congressman John McHugh and the USDA regarding financing for a water and wastewater project in the Alexandria Bay area; was ask to speak to audience about processes that resulted in accomplishing the funding.
- Received one week of training in Process Communication Management in Bethesda, MD for the purpose of improving skills in managing group discussions focused on environmental improvements and to provide training to local government officials.
- Met with representatives of the USDA and New York Environmental Facilities Corporation to assess possibility of county-wide water authority in Western New York.

April / June

- April 3 - met with representatives of seven governments comprising Chadwick Bay Area Development Corporation to discuss strategy to pursue water district.
- April 17 - facilitated meeting for the Syracuse Lead Task Force which is interested in promoting awareness about lead contamination in children.
- April 22-24 - conducted training event at Syracuse University's Minnowbrook Conference Center for local government officials and technical assistance providers; announcement of renewed support from USDA for the EFC water and wastewater related work.
- Met with representatives of the Erie County Water Consortium to discuss possibility of have roundtable among 22 communities about prospective county wide water authority.
- May 7-8 - met with USDA representatives in Washington DC to present information about the work of the EFC and resources of the EFC Network.
- May 12-June 5 - supervised research project on values of public participation with environmental improvements conducted by eight Master of Public Administration students and presented to USDA Rural Utility Services.
- May 12-16 - facilitated implementation of student research project focused on procedural aspects involved in small community applications to fund water and wastewater infrastructure improvements; EFC staff presented cases on community

participation relative to cost recovery to course on environmental dispute resolution (EFC Director served as co-instructor of graduate course).

- May 20 - met with representatives of the Village of Hobart concerning prospective costs of environmental improvements and community building.
- Met with Village of Hoosick Falls to plan public outreach events necessary to educate public about wastewater consent order and costs to public.
- Met with City of Syracuse representatives about brownfields grant program, the history of the grant, and potential activities to pursue.
- May 28 - facilitated Community Roundtable in Town of Campbell; 64 residents attended.
- May 29 - facilitated PMFP Partnership Forum for technical assistance providers, new funding procedures primary topic, 38 in attendance.
- June 2 - attended meeting held by Susquehanna River Basin Coalition, presented information on EFC services.
- June 3 - facilitated meeting among business owners in Hoosick Falls concerning wastewater consent order and predicted estimated costs; gleaned input concerning methods to disseminate information to community at large; 18 attended.
- June 25 - facilitated meeting on behalf of Onondaga Lake Partnership for purpose of exploring the hiring of an Outreach Coordinator to manage the tasks and activities related to the clean-up of Onondaga Lake in Syracuse, New York.

July/September

- July 9 - facilitated meeting for the Syracuse Lead Task Force; attended by representatives from 17 separate agencies dedicated to environment, public health, and children.
- July 10 - met with Economic Development Director of Seneca County to introduce him to procedures to explore prospective funding for county wide water district; committed to work with County on public inputs and facilitation of dialogue among elected officials of municipalities in County.

- July 11 - met with representatives of Chadwick Bay Economic Development to plan series of public meetings and focus groups regarding creation of water authority.
- July 14 - facilitated subcommittee meeting of Onondaga Lake Partnership, which included representatives from EPA Region 2, Onondaga County, New York State Office of the Attorney General, and a nonprofit organization, for purpose of discussing attributes of potential Outreach Coordinator position.
- July 15-17 - conducted training event for local government officials and technical assistance providers at Syracuse University's Minnowbrook Conference Center.
- July 18 - presented information about the EFC and environmental organizations and agencies to Syracuse University graduate students interested in pursuing careers in environmental policy; 23 in attendance.
- July 21 - met with elected officials of the Town of Clayton, Hamlet of Depauville, to create strategy to elicit input from residence concerning the creation of a municipal water system.
- July 29 - facilitated meeting with Onondaga Lake Partnership to finalize decision to hire outreach coordinator.
- July 30 - met with stakeholders in Hoosick Falls to discuss wastewater consent order and elicit input regarding additional stakeholder groups to include in discussions.
- August 4-7 - attended Environmental Finance Advisory Board meeting in San Francisco.
- August 7 - met with managers of hazardous waste programs to present information about technology in use and available.
- August 18 - facilitated PMFP Partnership Forum for government officials and technical assistance providers; open discussion about infrastructure financing policies and impacts on small communities; 36 attended.
- August 25 - facilitated Chenango County Water Operators Council meeting as part of the Source Water Project activities.
- September 4 - facilitated final meeting of Onondaga Lake Partnership to reach consensus about whether to hire outreach coordinator.

- September 15-17 - conducted focus groups of business owners/representatives, residents, and local officials in the Chadwick Bay area to discuss creation of water authority and the perceptions stakeholders have of need and benefits.
- September 19 - met with SUNY ESF and Atlantic States Legal Foundation, a member of the Onondaga Lake Partnership, to discuss potential community based meeting on promoting recreational values of Onondaga Lake.
- September 23 - met with Seneca County elected officials to begin dialogue concerning creation of county wide water district.
- September 30 – October 3 - attended EFC Director's Meeting in Maine.

October/December

- October 14-16 - conducted training event for local government officials and technical assistance providers at the Antheneum Hotel of the Chautauqua Institute.
- October 21 - presented information about the EFC and PMFP to the Annual Conference of the New York Conference Of Mayors.
- October 22 - met with Seneca County representatives to discuss strategy for future discussions and educational outreach concerning county wide water district.
- October 25 - facilitated a community-based meeting concerning the recreational values of Onondaga Lake, attended by 22 individual business owners and sportsmen.
- November 7 and 14 - EFC staff received training in GIS mapping.
- November 11 - met with Onondaga Lake fisherman to provide input regarding methods to coalesce other sports representatives around the Onondaga Lake clean-up mission.
- November 13 - conducted Community Roundtable concerning creation of municipal water system in Depauville, New York, 56 attended.
- EFC staff received certification in Process Communication Management, a communication model valuable to environmental dispute resolution.

- December 2 - met with town supervisors from Alexandria Bay and Clayton to plan community-based project focused on educating the public about water and wastewater cost issues and other relative information.
- December 8 - conducted PMFP Technical Assistance Partnership Forum, 37 attended.
- December 9 - met with parties involved with the Town of Windsor's prospective plan to build a wastewater system for service to 264 households.

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